

**INTELLIGENCE NOTE**

BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

August 12, 1971

**UN: SOVIETS PUSHING GDR PARTICIPATION IN
STOCKHOLM ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE**

The USSR is using the environment issue as a political football in trying to achieve international recognition for the GDR (German Democratic Republic). To this end, Moscow has apparently decided to push hard for East German participation in the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm--even to the point of threatening to boycott the conference. While such tactics are probably only a continuation of their long-standing policy, they may be part of an intensive Soviet effort to register progress now on the question of GDR representation in international organizations to preempt the outcome of the ongoing inner-German talks. The initial battle could be fought in the Stockholm Conference Preparatory Committee, which is scheduled to begin work on September 13 in New York, where the Soviets will probably raise the issue of an invitation to the GDR.

Early Soviet Notice. At the April ECE plenary in Prague, the Soviets and East Europeans pushed hard for GDR participation in a proposed ministerial-level conference on environmental problems in early May and managed to downgrade it to a "symposium of experts."*

*For full account of Soviet and East European tactics see REUS-21 "ECE/GDR: The Prague Environmental Symposium--A Shortlived Compromise," May 20, 1971 (CONFIDENTIAL).

This report was produced by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. Aside from normal substantive exchange with other agencies at the working level, it has not been coordinated elsewhere.

~~SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM/BACKGROUND USE ONLY~~

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND969051By I

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

RSGN-16

SCI 41-3 24N

In early June Soviet officials at the UN told the Italians that they were "deadly serious" about including the GDR in the Stockholm Conference and threatened to use the same tactics as in Prague.

A month later Nestorenko, the Soviet representative to the summer ECOSOC session in Geneva, told Ambassador Bush that the USSR understood the keen interest of the US in the environment question. He then said that the USSR felt that participation should be open to all countries, making clear that GDR exclusion would cause a serious problem for the USSR, which would be obliged to reconsider its own participation in the conference. Nestorenko urged that the US find "modalities" to avoid GDR exclusion before the end of the next UN General Assembly, emphasizing that this was a specific situation and that he was not proposing a change in fundamental US policy of opposing GDR participation in such meetings.

Swedes Under Pressure. Nestorenko also approached the Swedish representatives to ECOSOC, to whom he read a statement emphasizing (a) the "universality" the Soviets envisioned at the Stockholm Conference applied only to the GDR, not the PRC, North Korea, and North Vietnam; (b) if the GDR does not participate, the USSR must "reexamine" its participation; and (c) the Swedes should tell other Scandinavians about the Soviet position. Nestorenko also threatened the possibility of downgrading the conference to a symposium but made no reference to "modalities."

The Swedes were apparently impressed by the Soviet threat and under the impression that the Soviets intend to raise the matter in the Stockholm Preparatory Committee on September 13 in New York. However, an official of the Conference Secretariat recently noted that he has observed no indication

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NNP969051By I~~SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM/BACKGROUND USE ONLY~~

Swedish government is prepared to acquiesce to Soviet demands on East German participation as a price for having the Conference.

On the other hand, Swedish Premier Olaf Palme, according to a reliable source, told West German officials that he would like to convince the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) of the necessity of inviting the East Germans because of the pressure which would be exerted on his government by the Swedish public and other Scandinavian countries to have the GDR invited. In addition, he was opposed to downgrading the conference to a symposium because of the resulting loss in prestige of Sweden as host of a major UN conference.

West Germans Concerned. Soviet tactics are viewed with concern by West German officials, including Foreign Minister Scheel who stressed to his NATO colleagues this spring that the question of the position of the GDR in international organizations was posing increasing difficulties. This is so, said Scheel, because (a) since December 1970 there has been a recognizable decrease of resistance by many countries to GDR efforts to obtain membership in international organizations, and (b) as a result of the Berlin negotiations there will emerge changes which in turn will bring a change in GDR status, for example, in the form of strong pressure to accept GDR participation in other international forums such as multilateral preparations for MBFR or CES.

The FRG regards the Soviet term "modalities" as a gimmick and is afraid that the US feels so strongly about the importance of Soviet participation in

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NNP969051By I~~SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM/BACKGROUND USE ONLY~~

the Conference that it is willing to "invent some modality" to permit GDR attendance. Consequently, they insist that the "Vienna formula" (i.e., that members of the UN, parties to the ICJ, specialized agencies, and IAEA be invited to participate) must be maintained and that for the time being the West must continue to take a hard line against GDR participation.

Soviet Policy. For years Soviet attempts on the GDR's behalf have achieved the regularity and predictability of set exercises. Soviet tactics at the Prague conference, however, were unusual and precipitated concern that they represented the opening gun of an intensive campaign by Moscow to achieve a breakthrough for the GDR.

In the interests of its peace offensive, however, in the past eight months Moscow has deemphasized the acceptance of the GDR in the UN and other international organizations as a full-fledged member. (The Soviets have also deemphasized the issue of diplomatic recognition of the GDR.)* Thus, although Moscow's concentration on detente tactics in Europe may have led it temporarily to soft-pedal some aspects of East Germany's desired international status, there is no doubt the basic Soviet position is unchanged.

Prospects. The Soviets have served fair warning that they intend to pursue the matter energetically, perhaps even to the point of boycotting

*See RSEN-42 "Signalling from East Berlin: Apparently Positive", June 17, 1971 (CONFIDENTIAL); also, RSEN-31 "Honecker visits Moscow: A Turning of the Screws", May 20, 1971 (CONFIDENTIAL).

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NNP969051By I~~SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM/BACKGROUND USE ONLY~~

the conference. They evidently hope to capitalize on the importance the US attaches to environmental problems, which in turn are low on the Soviet list of priorities. It is doubtful, however, that they would wish to provoke the remaining countries (i.e., those which sympathize with GDR participation but which have an interest in environmental problems) by trying to reduce the conference to a symposium. In any case such a move would need the approval of the General Assembly, which convened the Conference, and it is unlikely the Soviets could muster the required support for such a political decision.

The Soviets are likely to raise the issue at the meeting of the Preparatory Committee, although it is expected that this move will be successfully referred to the 26th General Assembly for a decision. Regardless of the Assembly's decision, the Swedes as hosts will undoubtedly be under continued pressure from the Soviets and others to arrange for some form of GDR participation and may feel compelled to invite the East Germans as their guests. Such participation by the GDR would give the East Germans increased international stature at a particularly delicate time because the issue of FRG-GDR relationships now before the inner-German talks will probably not have been resolved.

INR/Strategic and General Research
Director : F. Perez *[signature]*
Analyst : J. Donovan *JD*
Extension : 21195
Date : August 12, 1971
Released by : *JD*

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NNP969051By I~~SECRET/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM/BACKGROUND USE ONLY~~